

of "shocking"; vivacious court ladies had a code of ethics which allowed them to be immoral without fear of exposure or shame. It is not until the end of the period that signs of any improvement are noticeable, and then it is a change to the extreme--a change from "boorish behavior" to "stilted politeness". George I, George II, and Queen Caroline highly valued common-sense and agreeable manners; yet the gallantry of the time directly opposed both virtues.

Travellers abroad noted the absence of culture in English manners. There were, however, many instances of English gentlemen and ladies distinguished for their graceful carriage, choice language, exact diction because "to be elegant and to have good form was a man's first duty."

The period is known as the Classic Age, the Pseudo-Classic Age, the Augustan Age, and the Age of Queen Anne. There is a revival of classicism in the effort to have literature conform to rules established by great writers of other nations. The creative power of the Elizabethans is absent, and the writing develops into an elegant formalism in keeping with the elaborate social code then prevalent. It is an age of prose. The education of the gentleman was considered important. His education was usually under the supervision of a tutor, supplemented by attendance at one of the universities and foreign travel for a year or so. At court card-playing (quadrille, whist), for the time being displaced reading and intelligent conversation, but it aided in uniting the sexes. George II hated books.¹

1. Social England, vol. III.